DELLTechnologies

Elevating future generations and research possibilities via technology

A leading research-intensive university upgrades to flexible technology, boosts security and control, and delivers campus-wide access and usability.

Educator profile

Leading Higher Education

Higher Education | United States

Boosted security and data recovery capabilities.

Organization needs

With an expensive, challenging legacy system and limited resources, a leading university's IT department needed to bridge its infrastructure gaps. By upgrading to a centralized, flexible consumption model, the university is providing new services and campus-wide technology access to help elevate future generations and enable research breakthroughs.

Organization results

- Streamlined operations with simplified infrastructure.
- Achieved campus-wide anytime, anywhere secure access for 15+ colleges.
- Established consistent management via consolidated technology control.
- Expanded processability across a diverse dataset.
- Reaped cost savings via flexible consumption IT model.

Solutions at a glance

- Dell APEX Flex on Demand**
- Dell VxRail
- Dell PowerScale OneFS
- Superna Eyeglass® Ransomware Defender
- Dell Unity

A leading research university seeking a solution to an expensive and aging network infrastructure is reaping the benefits of simplified and consolidated control. The new capabilities provide agile and secure data access from anywhere and across its more than 15 undergraduate and graduate schools and colleges.

The university faced the all-too-common challenge of modernizing its infrastructure with limited budgetary and staffing resources. The legacy system presented management challenges, especially as staffing did not increase with IT demand. On a price-per-terabyte basis, the legacy IT proved to be a costly solution. The central IT department ultimately issued an RFP seeking a cloud-like consumption model that would allow it to consolidate platforms and offer a service catalog to its colleges, research divisions, research labs and other on-campus offices.
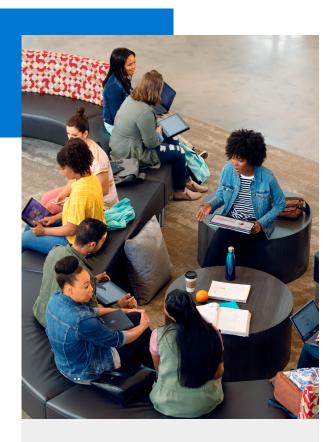
Today, the university is providing services to 30,000 students and more than 15 colleges, plus handling a vast and diverse dataset — from student records to proprietary intellectual property. The solution employs APEX Flex on Demand, VxRail, PowerScale OneFS, Superna Eyeglass® Ransomware Defender and Unity.

A standout solution generating increased demand

After a competitive RFP process, APEX Flex on Demand stood out as the solution that could deliver cost-efficient, enterprise-level compute, storage and functionality, offering operational benefits for the central IT staff and allowing end users to access data from anywhere.

Since then, the success of the solution and increasing demand led the university to add capacity to its PowerScale network-attached storage (NAS) a short 18 months after the initial contract. Additionally, central IT recently added Dell Ransomware Defender to monitor data and prevent ransomware attacks.

The APEX Flex on Demand solution that the university deployed now has multiple petabytes of capacity providing data storage on the production and disaster recovery environments.

Achieved campus-wide anytime, anywhere secure access for 15+ colleges.

Unified and trusted services

The university's new central IT service catalog has transformed its operations, providing both secure data storage and protection — and the comprehensive toolkit built into the PowerScale NAS and OS as a unified offering across all campuses.

Instead of piecemeal, non-enterprise class storage with no enterprise functionality, the university offers a simple and centrally run service that expands access to wherever a broad and varied end user base needs it. Faculty and business office employees now know that, unlike a local storage device, an off-site disaster recovery system has a replica of all data in case of an event.

Meanwhile, as an internal offering, APEX Flex on Demand has broken down inefficient organizational silos. The colleges and affiliated laboratories can turn to a solution offered at a reasonable price by the university's own IT department instead of issuing their own RFPs for external and more expensive solutions to meet their IT infrastructure needs.

Capacity for growth

At central IT, the university's team found that its system support is the same as if it had purchased the infrastructure itself as a capital expenditure. Instead of having to invest in hardware with a limited lifecycle, the team has the comfort of knowing that it has options to manage growth since it already added capacity 18 months into the initial contract to accommodate a faster growth rate.
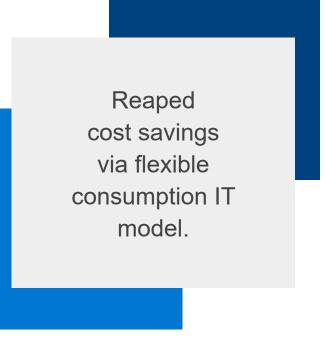
Before embarking on the transformation, the central IT department had an independent consultant assess the university's infrastructure. The department used those findings to build the RFP for an expert partner to fill in the blanks on how to realize a long-term solution.

Having previously worked with individual departments at the university, Dell Technologies responded to the RFP and presented a vision for a service catalog. The solution, built on APEX Flex on Demand and synergized with the university's internal reorganization, helped achieve consistent, cost-effective and centralized IT operations.

Established consistent management
via consolidated
technology control.

Simplified internal management

The Dell university partner simplified its approach to the IT infrastructure while expanding its capacity for growth and offering secure and trusted solutions for the entire organization.

With an expensive and challenging legacy system and limited resources, the university's central IT department found a solution for its own challenges and those of its departments and schools. Using its own storage units plagued with firmware updates waiting to be installed and no off-site data backup plan in place, each of the university's servers was a potential entry point for malicious actors.

Today, faculty working on projects can reach next-level breakthroughs, with the knowledge of secure and replicated data storage services. And the costs associated with the physical maintenance of the servers is pooled into centralized control, removing a burden from users. Furthermore, as remote work continues to grow in popularity, the university has the infrastructure to support this new reality.

Reaped cost savings via flexible consumption IT model.

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